

Allah Diya

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An article on the practice of saying Allah Diya in the Mahdavia Community

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By

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Allah Diya

What is 'Allah Diya'?

Amongst Mahdavis, when we offer something (money, food, clothes, etc.) to anyone, especially those who have renounced the world (*tarik-ud-duniya*), we say '*Allah Diya*' or '*Allah ne diya hai*' i.e. Allah has given this or this is from Allah.

Why do we say it?

Assume that your employer gives you some money and asks you to deliver it to his poor friend. You take the money and travel to your employer's friend's house. On meeting him, you exchange pleasantries and then you give him the money. He is very happy on getting the money and thanks you for it. You then realise that you haven't told him that the money is from your employer. Because of this he is under the impression that you have given him the money and he is thanking you for it. To clarify the situation, you tell him, "No, don't thank me. Thank my employer. The money is from him. I am only delivering it to you." The man then asks you to convey thanks to your employer. Had you told at the time of giving the money itself that it is from your employer, then he would have thanked your employer and would not be under the impression that the money was from you.

Similarly, Allah has given us money and wealth to spend. We only deliver it. That is why we say '*Allah Diya*'.

Two things are achieved when we say '*Allah Diya*'.

First, the giver is giving up his claim of ownership over the food or money which he is giving. The giver proclaims that it is not he but Allah who has given this. The giver was only a temporary custodian of the food or money which he is passing on to the receiver.

Second, because of this declaration, the person who receives it will have no hesitation in accepting it. He need not be indebted and obligated to the giver.

The best thing is that Allah is present in the eyes of the giver as well as the receiver.

To whom should we say 'Allah Diya'?

We should say '*Allah Diya*' when offering food or money to anyone. Saying '*Allah Diya*' is all the more important when we give something to *fuqara*. The *fuqara* observe *taqwa* (trust on Allah), so they consume only that which comes their way without expectation, without asking and on which '*Allah Diya*' is pronounced. Therefore, this etiquette should be observed diligently when offering something to *fuqara*.

Does the Holy Quran support this practice of saying Allah Diya?

This practice is rooted in the commandments of the Quran. Saying '*Allah Diya*', giving up the claim of ownership and establishing Allah's ownership on the item being given is rooted in the Quran.

Allah is the Sovereign (*Malik*) over all things

Allah says in the Quran that everything in the heavens and on earth belongs to him and He is the absolute owner of all things. The few verses given below prove this.

Allah says:

But to Allah belong all things in the heavens and on earth... (Surah An-Nisa 4:126)

At another place in the Holy Quran, Allah questions and then answers the question Himself thus:

Say: "To whom belongeth all that is in the heavens and on earth?" Say: "To Allah... (Surah Al-Anaam 6:12)

At yet another place in the Holy Quran, Allah says:

Say: "To whom belong the earth and all beings therein? (say) if ye know!" They will say, "To Allah!" say: "Yet will ye not receive admonition?" (Surah Al Mominoon 23:84-85)

Thus, the money, food, land, clothes, etc. which we have earned through *halal* (permissible) means actually belong to Allah. These Ayats tell us that Allah is the *Malik* (Sovereign, Owner) of everything on the earth and the heavens. Allah has given it to us so that we can spend it lawfully. Not for a moment should we start imagining that we are the owners of this wealth.

Thus it becomes obligatory on us to proclaim Allah's ownership over all things.

Allah Diya is mostly used when feeding people. Is there any verse in the Quran which mentions this?

Yes there is a verse in the Quran which speaks about feeding for the sake of Allah.

When somebody feeds a guest, it is quite natural for the guest to thank his host. However, if the host says, "This food is from Allah, so don't thank me. Instead, you can thank Allah.", then the host is actually following the Holy Quran.

Thus, the Holy Quran says:

And they feed, for the love of Allah, the indigent, the orphan, and the captive, (Saying), "We feed you only for the sake of Allah: no reward do we desire from you, nor thanks." (Surah Al-Insan/Ad-Dahr 76:8-9)

From the above Ayat we conclude:

- We should feed for the sake of Allah only
- We should not desire/ask for any compensation or reward from those we feed
- We should not desire/expect any thanks from those we feed

Thus there is no desire for any reward from the one being fed, not even the desire for a thanks. It is done for the sake of Allah alone. We do it for the sake of Allah and expect the reward from Him. All this is made possible only if the host says 'Allah Diya' while feeding. Then the guest who partakes the food knows that he need not pay for the food nor does he need to thank the host.

On the other hand if the host does not say Allah Diya, then it means that he is not feeding for the sake of Allah and he desires compensation for it or thanks for it. It also means that the host does not want any reward from Allah for this act. Therefore, the guest has two options. Either eat the food and thank his host or don't eat the food at all. A *Mutawakkil* (person who is dependent on Allah, i.e. the *fuqara*) will choose not to eat the food.

Who is a *Mutawakkil*?

A person who adheres to *Tawakkal* (trust on Allah) is called a *Mutawakkil*. A *Mutawakkil* is firm in his belief that Allah is the Sustainer (*Raziq*) and will eat only if the food comes in the name of Allah.

Therefore, the *Fuqara* who have taken the oath of *Tawakkal* will eat only if the host says Allah Diya.

But any person, whether he is a *Faqir* or not, should eat only if the host says Allah Diya otherwise it means that he becomes obligated to the host.

Are there any other related verses in the Holy Quran?

There are many other verses, but it we would like the reader's attention on the following verse:

... and spend out of what we have given. (Al Baqara 2:3)

It is interesting to note, that in this verse Allah Most High has used two words '**spend**' and '**give**'.

To describe what He has given us, Allah has used the word '**give**'. When the same action is done by us, He has used the word '**spend**'. Allah does not use the word '**give**' for us. Thus the ownership is clearly specified – that He gives and we only spend – we do not give. Due to this reason too, we must say '*Allah Diya*'.

Some people insist that they say '*Bismillah shuru karo*' and that is enough?

The person who eats the food will always say *Bismillah* and start eating irrespective of whether he is eating at home or as a guest. And he will say *Bismillah* whether the host reminds him of *Bismillah* or not. But when the food before you has not come in the name of Allah (as mentioned in the above quoted verse 76:9 of the Holy Quran), how can it be eaten? Therefore one has to wait until the food comes in the name of Allah.

Should we use exactly the words '*Allah Diya*'?

The intention of withdrawing ownership and attaching Allah's name should be made clear. Saying '*Allah Diya*' makes the intention clear. If a different set of words – '*Allah ne diya hai*' or '*This is from Allah*' or '*Haza Lillah*', etc. – is used to convey the same meaning, that is also acceptable.

- Syed Mohammed Suhael
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